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Creature of Climax

by

Agata Derda

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Fine Arts

in

Printmaking

Department of Art and Design

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Spring 2014

Edmonton, Alberta

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Creature of Climax

Statement by Agata Derda

"I am a member of a fragile species, still new to the earth, the youngest creatures of any scale, here only a few moments as evolutionary time is measured, a juvenile species, a child of a species. We are only tentatively set in place, error prone, at risk of fumbling, in real danger at the moment of leaving behind only a thin layer of our fossils, radioactive at that."¹

In this current project I am focusing on issues surrounding the human tendency to egocentrism, self-destruction, and the subjugation of others. I find these character traits very curious, as they seem, especially when they become excessive, opposed to our natural drive for survival and the extension of our species².

The prints and sculptures in *Creature of Climax* represent remains of a modern civilization whose 'glory' days are past. The enigmatic machine/objects depicted in my prints are made out of the scraps of this collapsed civilization. Their purpose is not always clear and they can be interpreted in an open and metaphoric way.

Every machine/object present in my work looks like something made by hand, which is why there is a human presence in the work even though it is unseen. In my work I view the human as a *creature* that is directed by its desire to maximize pleasure and minimize suffering for itself. However, this behavior in the long-run can be self-destructive, not only for the individual but also for mankind as a whole.³ *Climax* represents the objective or goal for an action resulting in hedonistic pleasure, while at the same time representing the culminating point of that act which can result in *the end of days*.

Although much of the work in the exhibition has a dark emotional tone, it is my hope that the overall exhibition does speak to themes of regeneration. For example, the piece called *Nature* speaks about how we can be shaped into sharp and aggressive creatures by life and our circumstances. However the constantly changing wind, symbolized in my work by the clouds, can propel us in another direction that may be better for the *Creature's* future.

¹ Lewis Thomas, *The Fragile Species* (New York: Scribner's/Toronto: Maxwell Macmillan Canada, 1992), 25.

² Elliot Aronson, Timothy D. Wilson & Robin M. Akert, *Social Psychology: The Heart and the Mind* (New York, NY: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1994), 457.

³ Michael Schmidt-Salomon, *Humanizm Ewolucyjny: Dlaczego możliwe jest dobre życie w złym świecie [Manifesto of Evolutionary Humanism: A Plea for a Contemporary Culture]*, first published 2005], trans. A. Lipinski (Slupsk: Wydawnictwo Dobra Literatura, 2012), 21.

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Aronson, Elliot, Timothy D. Wilson & Robin M. Akert. *Social psychology: the heart and the mind*. New York, NY: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1994.

Beckett, Samuel. *Waiting for Godot*. New York : Grove Press, 2011. (Original work published 1954).

Berlinger, Joe and Bruce Sinofsky. *Paradise Lost: The Child Murders at Robin Hood Hills*. Motion Picture. United States: Home Box Office, 1996.

Cialdini, Robert B. *Influence: science and practice*. New York: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1993.

Diamond, Jared. *Collapse: How societies choose to fail or succeed*. New York: Penguin Books, 2006.

Hillcoat, John. *The Road*. Motion Picture. United States: Dimension Films, The Weinstein Company, 2009.

Peters, William. *The Eye Of The Storm*. TV Series. United states: Xerox Films, 1968.

Powell, Robert. (Narrator). *World War II In HD Colour*. TV series. United States: IMG Entertainment, 2009.

Schmidt-Salomon, Michael. *Humanizm Ewolucyjny: Dlaczego możliwe jest dobre życie w złym świecie*. (A. Lipinski, Trans.). Slupsk: Wydawnictwo Dobra Literatura, 2012. (Original work published 2005).

Steel, Eric. *The Bridge*. Motion Picture. United States: IFC Films, Koch-Lorber Films/E1 Films, 2006.

Tarr, Bela. *Werckmeister Harmonies*. Motion Picture. Hungary: Artificial Eye, 2000.

Thomas, Lewis. *The fragile species*. New York: Scribner's/Toronto: Maxwell Macmillan Canada, 1992.

Wenders, Wim. *Pina*. Motion Picture. Germany: Hanway Films, 2011.

Yalom, Irvin D. *Love's executioner and other tales of psychotherapy*. New York: Basic Books, 1989.

AGATA DERDA

DOB: 08 Aug 1981

205 10570 83 AVE, NW, T6E 2C9, Edmonton

Tel: **587 337 0929** / Email: **agata_derda@yahoo.com/ www.agataderda.com**

EDUCATION

- **2011-2013** UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA, EDMONTON, CANADA

Master of Fine Arts in **Printmaking**

- **2006-2010** GALWAY-MAYO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, GALWAY, IRELAND

Bachelor of Arts (Honours in Art & Design)

Subjects: **Printmaking, Image making and graphic design, traditional and digital printmaking, Visual Communication**

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- **2013 Winter** - Primary Instructor, subject; Lithography, University of Alberta, Canada
- **2012 Fall** - Primary Instructor, subject; Art Fundamentals, University of Alberta, Canada
- **2012 Summer** - Laboratory Supervisor, University of Alberta, Canada
- **2012 Summer** - Laboratory Assistant - Art Fundamentals, University of Alberta, Canada
- **2012 Winter** - Teaching Assistant, subject: - Word and Image, University of Alberta, Canada
- **2011 Fall** - Teaching Assistant, subject: - Art Fundamentals, University of Alberta, Canada
- **Nov 2010 – May 2011** - Primary Instructor, subject: - Drawing Intermediate, Lorg Printmakers, Galway, Ireland
- **Apr 2010** - Primary Instructor- two day workshop, subject: Advance Etching, Lorg Printmakers, Galway, Ireland

AWARDS & ACHIEVEMENTS

- **2012** The Mary Louise Imrie Graduate Student Award, Canada
- **2012** The Alberta Foundation for Arts Scholarship, Canada
- **2011** The University of Alberta Scholarship for Master of Fine Arts Graduate Students, Canada
- **2010** Student of the Year in Printmaking Award, Galway, Ireland
- **2010** Lorg Printmakers Bursary Award, Galway, Ireland

SOLO EXHIBITIONS:

2013

CREATURE OF CLIMAX Exhibition for the degree of Master of Fine Arts in Printmaking, FAB Gallery, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada

2011

HOMO APPARATUS First Solo Show sponsored by Lorg Printmakers as part of Bursary Award, Lorg Printmakers, Galway, Ireland

GROUP EXHIBITIONS PARTICIPATION:

2013

Prismatika – Illusions of The Universe, Steppes Gallery, Edmonton, Canada

International Print Triennial – Krakow 2012, Where is Printmaking?, Contemporary Art Gallery, Opole, Poland

The 4th Guanlan International Print Biennial, Guanlan Original Printmaking Base, Shenzhen, China

2012

Walking On Walls, Society of Northern Alberta Print Gallery, Edmonton, Canada

Shy Rabbit Contemporary Arts Print International III, International Juried Online Exhibition, Pagosa Springs, USA

2011

SNAP's Annual Print Affair, Society of Northern Alberta Print Gallery, Edmonton, Canada

The Collective Memory Project: Responses to Eugenics in Alberta, Edmonton, Canada

2010

Impressions '10, Contemporary Irish Printmaking, Galway Arts Center, Galway, Ireland

LE TEMPS DES SIRÈNES - The 2nd International Biennial of Women in Contemporary Art - Lorient, France

RDS Travelling Art Awards Exhibition, ISLAND Arts Center, Lisburn, Northern Ireland

Royal Dublin Society Student Art Awards Exhibition, RDS, Dublin, Ireland

Launch at Lorg Printmakers, Official Gallery Opening, Galway, Ireland

The Biennial International Miniature Print Exhibition VI - Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

Honours Degree Show - GMIT student's exhibition, Cluain Mhuire, GMIT Galway, Ireland

2009

Diverse Printmaking - Ordinary Degree Graduate Show GMIT student's exhibition, RK Burt Gallery, London, Great Britain

Diverse Printmaking - Ordinary Degree Graduate Show GMIT student's exhibition, NUIG, Galway, Ireland

Proximity '09- Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology student's exhibition, GMIT, Galway, Ireland

2008

Impressions '08, Contemporary Irish Printmaking, Galway Arts Center, Galway, Ireland

RDS Travelling Art Awards Exhibition, Damer House, Roscrea, Co. Tipperary, Ireland

RDS Travelling Art Awards Exhibition, Alley Arts Center, Strabane, Co. Tyrone, Ireland

Royal Dublin Society Student Art Awards Exhibition, RDS, Dublin, Ireland

Proximity '08 - Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology student's exhibition, GMIT, Galway, Ireland

DVD Image List

Agata Derda

- File name: derda.01
Title: **Underground**
Date: 2013
Materials: Digital Print
Dimensions: 20.5 x 13cm
- File name: derda.02
Title: **Black Water**
Date: 2013
Materials: Photo Intaglio, Digital Print and Chine Colle
Dimensions: 75 x 57.5 cm
- File name: derda.03
Title: **Crawling**
Date: 2013
Materials: Digital Print
Dimensions: 35 x 23 cm
- File name: derda.04
Title: **Darkest Freedom**
Date: 2013
Materials: Photo Intaglio, Digital Print and Chine Colle
Dimensions: 89 x 57.5
- File name: derda.05
Title: **Enter Night**
Date: 2013
Materials: Digital Print
Dimensions: 22.5 x 29 cm
- File name: derda.06
Title: **Flowers**
Date: 2013
Materials: Digital Print
Dimensions: 37 x 27 cm
- File name: derda.07
Title: **Homey**
Date: 2013
Materials: Digital Print
Dimensions: 41.5 x 27 cm

- File name: derda.08
Title: **Past, Present, Future**
Date: 2013
Materials: Photo Intaglio, Digital Print and Chine Colle
Dimensions: 87.5 x 60 cm
- File name: derda.09
Title: **Pointing At**
Date: 2013
Materials: Photo Intaglio, Digital Print and Chine Colle
Dimensions: 87 x 59 cm
- File name: derda.10
Title: **Pressure**
Date: 2013
Materials: Photo Intaglio, Digital Print and Chine Colle
Dimensions: 57 x 82 cm
- File name: derda.11
Title: **Pretender**
Date: 2013
Materials: Photo Intaglio, Digital Print and Chine Colle
Dimensions: 57.5 x 82 cm
- File name: derda.12
Title: **Sharp As They Come**
Date: 2013
Materials: Photo Intaglio, Digital Print and Chine Colle
Dimensions: 59 x 83 cm
- File name: derda.13
Title: **Spinning Fate**
Date: 2013
Materials: Photo Intaglio, Digital Print and Chine Colle
Dimensions: 59 x 88
- File name: derda.14
Title: **Nature**
Date: 2013
Materials: Photo Intaglio, Chine Colle, Projection with Sound
Dimensions: 307 x 264 cm
- File name: derda.15
Title: **Door Opener**
Date: 2013
Materials: Steel, Wood and Sand
Dimensions: 340 x 260 x 260cm



































